

ARM WRESTLING CHAMPIONS

THE JOURNEY, THE
TRAINING, THE MINDSET

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Chapter 1: Introduction – Why Arm Wrestling Is More Than a Sport

Armwrestling has always been more than two people testing their strength at a table. To those who truly understand it, this sport represents resilience, focus, and the will to overcome anything life throws your way. Whether you're a seasoned competitor or someone discovering this sport for the first time, arm wrestling is a gateway to becoming stronger, not just physically, but mentally and emotionally.

When I first wrapped my hand around another competitor's, I wasn't thinking about winning a medal or a trophy—I was thinking about challenge. Challenge against myself. Challenge against limitation. Challenge against fear. And through that challenge, I found clarity, purpose, and lifelong community.

The beauty of arm wrestling lies in its simplicity. You don't need a gym full of equipment or a team of professionals. You need a table, an opponent, and the will to improve. Yet within that simplicity lies endless complexity: the angles of leverage, the timing of the start, the psychology before a match, and the balance between power and precision. Arm wrestling has taken me across Canada, into the United States, and to stages where the best in the world come to compete. But the true lessons I've learned weren't about winning gold—they were about building character, discipline, and compassion for others who share the same passion.

Over my 30+ years of involvement in this sport, I've seen it all—injuries, comebacks, triumphs, losses, and countless friendships. I've also learned that the lessons from arm wrestling extend far beyond the table. They apply to your health, your relationships, and the way you face life's challenges.

When people ask me why I continue to arm wrestle after so many years, the answer is simple: because it keeps me young. Physically, mentally, and spiritually. The sport gives me a reason to train, to connect, and to stay grounded in a world that moves faster every year.

As you read this book, you'll not only discover techniques, exercises, and mental strategies—you'll also uncover a philosophy of strength built on patience, respect, and love for the game. I hope that this eBook serves as your guide and your motivation to pursue greatness, one match at a time.

Chapter 2: The Foundation – Why Train and What You Gain

Every athlete starts with a reason. Some train to win, others to stay fit, and a few because they simply love the process of getting better. My reason? All of the above—and then some.

When I first began arm wrestling, I wasn't naturally gifted. I lost more matches than I won. I remember going home sore, sometimes frustrated, but never defeated. Each loss became a lesson, each match a reminder that improvement only comes through consistent effort and humility.

I trained because I wanted to feel stronger—not just physically, but mentally. Arm wrestling isn't only about who has the biggest biceps or strongest grip; it's about understanding your body, your timing, and your opponent's movement. It teaches you to think under pressure, to adapt when things don't go as planned, and to stay calm when everyone else loses focus. There's another layer to training—community. Walk into any arm wrestling club, and you'll find people from all walks of life: mechanics, students, parents, teachers, and entrepreneurs. What unites them is passion. They gather weekly to train, learn, and share stories. Some are chasing world titles; others just want to feel healthy and connected. The laughter, sweat, and teamwork that fill those rooms are what keep the sport alive.

Beyond the physical benefits—stronger arms, shoulders, forearms, and grip—arm wrestling improves cardiovascular health and endurance. It builds resilience and mental clarity. There's something powerful about standing across from another person and testing yourself. It forces you to be present, to confront self-doubt, and to trust your preparation. I've always believed that you don't need to be the best to fall in love with a sport. You just need to show up and give it your all. Over the years, arm wrestling has given me more than I ever expected: lifelong friends, a reason to travel, a platform to teach, and an outlet for personal growth.

I made this website and started coaching because I want to share those same benefits with you. My approach is open and honest—I don't hold back techniques or secrets.

Everything I've learned over the past three decades is yours to apply. Whether you're here to become a better competitor or simply improve your health, you've come to the right place.

My message is simple: arm wrestling will teach you how to win—but even more importantly, it will teach you how to handle loss with grace, how to persevere through setbacks, and how to transform challenges into opportunities. The body becomes stronger through resistance, and so does the mind.

Chapter 3: Developing a Well-Balanced Training Routine

If you want to become a complete arm wrestler, balance is everything. Balance in technique, training intensity, and rest. I've seen people who focus only on strength but neglect technique; others who master form but never develop speed. The key to long-term progress lies in combining both.

Every arm wrestling training session should include these five key elements:

1. Mock starts
2. Top-rolls
3. Hooks
4. Side pressure
5. Strap practice

Each of these drills targets a different aspect of your game. Mock starts sharpen your reflexes and reaction time. Top-rolls and hooks improve control and adaptability. Side pressure builds the raw drive you need at the table, while strap practice prepares you for competition scenarios where slips are inevitable.

It's essential to understand the order of training. Arm wrestle before you weight train. When you arm wrestle, you give 100%—there's no halfway effort. Doing it before lifting ensures you're fresh and can develop technique under natural intensity. Then, during

weight training, you can isolate weak muscles and reinforce strength without risking injury.

A balanced arm wrestling athlete focuses on four pillars:

- **Speed:** You need explosive reaction time to gain position quickly.
- **Strength:** Without consistent resistance training, your endurance fades fast.
- **Technique:** Knowing when to rotate, when to drag, and how to use leverage separates champions from amateurs.
- **Psychology:** Staying calm, composed, and confident under pressure wins more matches than brute force ever will.

Your training should reflect these principles. For example, after a day of table practice, spend time analyzing how you felt—were you faster, slower, more tired on one arm? Journaling this progress helps fine-tune your next session.

And remember, overtraining can set you back. Muscles grow during rest, not during stress. Listen to your body, sleep well, and fuel properly. A great arm wrestler doesn't just train harder—they train smarter. When I coach, I often tell my students: don't train just to win the next match—train to stay strong for the next 30 years.

The sport rewards those who are patient, consistent, and willing to learn. If you can develop balance in your body and mind, you'll not only become a better arm wrestler—you'll become a stronger version of yourself.

Chapter 4: How to Prepare for a Tournament Like a Champion

Preparing for a tournament isn't just about showing up strong; it's about showing up ready — physically, mentally, and emotionally. The moments before competition reveal whether your months of dedication, diet, and discipline were balanced correctly. Every tournament, no matter how big or small, is an opportunity to learn, grow, and refine your strategy.

When I first began competing, I made the mistake of treating preparation as just another workout cycle. I'd lift, I'd pull, I'd sweat — and then I'd show up. But over the

years, I realized there's a science to peak performance. Preparation doesn't begin a week before the event; it begins the moment you commit to competing. From that day forward, everything you do — from your morning walk to the food you eat — becomes part of your tournament plan.

Cardiovascular Conditioning

Many people underestimate the role of cardio in arm wrestling. It's not just a strength sport; it's an endurance sport. Matches can last from a few seconds to over a minute, and every heartbeat counts. I've always trained my lungs and heart to keep up with my arms. I mix walking and jogging in what I call "controlled cardio." I walk to warm up, then jog until my heart rate enters my fat-burning zone. Once fatigue hits, I walk again — cycling through this for 30–45 minutes.

Over time, this combination improved not only my endurance but also my mental stamina. When you can control your breathing under stress, you gain an edge over your opponent. In the middle of a high-intensity pull, calm breathing helps you stay focused on technique instead of panic.

Weight Management

In competitive arm wrestling, your weight class can be a deciding factor in your success. I always aim to compete in the lowest healthy weight category. Why? Lighter competitors generally have faster reaction times, while strength can still be maintained with proper conditioning.

To manage my weight, I track calories burned versus calories consumed. I don't follow fad diets — I rely on consistency. Small daily caloric deficits help shed fat gradually while maintaining strength. For water weight, I prefer soaking in a hot bath or using a sauna 24 hours before weigh-in. Losing more than 8–9 pounds of water in a short time is dangerous and often counterproductive, as you sacrifice strength for the sake of the scale.

A few days before the competition, I always visualize myself stepping onto the scale confidently. I plan ahead — choosing hotels with bathtubs or saunas when traveling, ensuring everything goes smoothly. Tournament preparation is about removing surprises. The fewer things you have to worry about, the more mental energy you can invest in performance.

Table Practice and Mock Matches

Nothing replaces time at the table. Every training partner teaches you something different — how to resist pressure, how to control angles, or how to recover mid-match. I simulate referee starts, sometimes even recording myself giving the “Ready... Go!” command. This solo shadow practice keeps my reaction time sharp even when training alone.

In practice, I like to alternate offense and defense. Five rounds of offensive pulls followed by five rounds of defense create balanced skill development. If you have access to straps, use them often. Most matches at tournaments end up strapped, and understanding how straps affect leverage is a game-changer.

Strategic Rest and Recovery

Recovery is often ignored by beginners who think more training equals better performance. But in my experience, the best results come from strategic rest. One week before the tournament, I taper my intensity. No heavy table time. Light mobility work, stretching, and sleep take priority.

By the night before the competition, I’ve already done the hard work. My body knows what to do. My focus shifts from physical readiness to mental clarity — visualizing each move, each grip, each surge of strength.

The morning of the tournament, I remind myself: “Trust your training, not your nerves.” That mindset keeps me grounded and confident — the foundation of any champion.

Chapter 5: Strength, Technique, and Muscle Synchronization

Strength and technique are two sides of the same coin. You can’t win without both. Over the decades, I’ve seen powerlifters lose to smaller, strategic arm wrestlers — and I’ve seen highly technical athletes outmatched by raw power. The secret is synchronization — aligning your muscles, mind, and movement into one fluid execution.

Understanding Functional Strength

Gym strength and arm wrestling strength aren't the same. Traditional exercises like bench press or curls can help, but arm wrestling demands rotational, static, and explosive strength. Every pull uses multiple muscle chains — wrist flexors, pronators, deltoids, back, and even legs. Yes, legs. I've pulled hamstrings mid-match more than once, proving that arm wrestling is a full-body sport.

When I train, I replicate real pulling motions. I use straps and cable handles that allow wrist rotation. Each rep mimics the motion of a match: dragging, cupping, and controlling the wrist. For every push movement, I add a pull. Balance matters.

I train my abs and lower back every day, as they form the core of stability. These muscles recover quickly and allow me to transfer power from my legs to my upper body. Without core stability, you can't harness your strength efficiently.

The 3-Day Split Routine

To stay balanced, I use a simple but effective training split:

- Day 1: Upper body (focus on pulling muscles — lats, biceps, forearms)
- Day 2: Upper body (focus on pressing muscles — chest, triceps, shoulders)
- Day 3: Lower body and core (legs, glutes, abs, lower back)

Each day, I incorporate wrist flexion and hand-grip variations. Hand tools such as resistance bands, hand grippers, power balls, and grip rollers keep my fingers and forearms sharp. The key is consistency — hands and forearms are resilient, so train them often.

Muscle Synchronization

When your entire body fires at once, your power multiplies. In arm wrestling, this is called muscle synchronicity — the ability to engage every muscle at the exact moment of the "Go."

Here's what that looks like:

- Elbow planted firmly on the pad
- Shoulder aligned with the wrist

- Hips positioned high and close to the table
- Core tight, back engaged
- Legs grounded, driving power upward

When all of these movements connect seamlessly, you become unstoppable. I practice this sequence until it becomes muscle memory. The goal is to think less and react more. During a match, hesitation costs victory.

Strategic Thinking

Physical strength alone doesn't win tournaments. Observing opponents, recognizing their strengths, and adjusting your strategy mid-match separates great athletes from legends. I always study how competitors move during warm-ups. If they rely heavily on a top-roll, I prepare a hook. If they favor a defensive position, I plan to attack early.

Being unpredictable keeps opponents guessing. Variety isn't just for practice — it's a weapon in competition. The arm wrestler who can switch between styles mid-match gains a psychological and tactical advantage.

To synchronize your mind with your muscles, visualize success. Close your eyes before practice and imagine executing every move perfectly. Mental rehearsal strengthens neural connections and improves performance just as much as physical reps.

Strength without intelligence is wasted effort. Combine the two, and you'll develop power that feels effortless and unstoppable.

Chapter 6: The Psychology of Winning

If strength is the engine and technique is the steering wheel, psychology is the driver. Without mental control, even the strongest athlete can crumble under pressure.

Arm wrestling is as much about focus and confidence as it is about biceps and grip. The greatest champions aren't those who never feel nervous; they're the ones who channel that nervous energy into controlled aggression.

The Inner Game

Before every match, there's a conversation happening inside your mind. One voice whispers doubt — "What if I lose?" — and another whispers belief — "I've got this." The key is to make the latter louder. I learned this the hard way. Early in my career, I let nerves dictate my performance. My hands would shake, my timing was off, and I'd lose before the match even began.

Over time, I developed routines to control my mindset. Breathing exercises, visualization, and self-talk became my armor. I repeat affirmations like "I am calm, strong, and ready." It sounds simple, but it works. The mind listens to what it hears most often.

Using Psychology Against Opponents

Arm wrestling isn't just physical combat — it's psychological chess. I often talk to my competitors before matches, mentioning my past wins, how strong I feel, or how hard I've trained. It's not arrogance; it's strategy. Some opponents lose focus trying to measure themselves against your confidence.

But this game goes both ways. I've also learned not to get distracted by others' words. No matter what's said across the table, I stay locked into my own rhythm. Confidence is powerful, but composure is unstoppable.

Pre-Match Visualization

Visualization is my secret weapon. Before stepping to the table, I close my eyes and see the match unfold. I imagine gripping my opponent's hand, feeling the tension rise, hearing "Ready... Go!" and executing perfectly. I see myself driving, rotating, winning.

This process conditions the mind to believe the outcome before it happens. When reality matches your visualization, performance feels natural, not forced.

Embracing Pressure

Pressure is a privilege. It means you care. The trick is to redefine it not as anxiety but as energy. I remind myself that adrenaline is my body's way of preparing to perform. Instead of fighting it, I welcome it. When you accept pressure, it turns into focus.

Confidence and Recovery

True confidence doesn't mean you think you'll never lose. It means you trust yourself to recover no matter what happens. I've lost big matches — painful ones, even — but I never let them define me. Each loss became fuel for the next victory.

You can't control every opponent, referee, or condition — but you can control your reaction. That control is your greatest weapon.

Chapter 7: Becoming a Multi-Dimensional Arm Wrestler

One of the greatest lessons I've learned in my career is this: if you want to become a champion, you can't be predictable. You must evolve, adapt, and surprise. Arm wrestling, like life, rewards those who can change direction without losing focus.

Many competitors make the mistake of depending on their strongest move — the one that got them their first few wins. Maybe it's a powerful hook, a crushing top-roll, or a signature drag. But relying on a single move is like walking into battle with one weapon — sooner or later, someone will find a way to counter it.

To become truly great, you need to be multi-dimensional. That means training both your strengths and your weaknesses equally. It means being just as comfortable switching from a hook to a top-roll mid-match as you are with starting your favorite move. When you can adapt in real-time, you force your opponent to play your game instead of the other way around.

Balancing Strength and Strategy

In arm wrestling, power gets you to the table — but strategy keeps you there. The best athletes understand how to control position, read their opponent, and make adjustments mid-pull. Every motion tells a story. The way an opponent grips, how they position their shoulder, or where their elbow drifts — all of it gives clues.

I often spend the first second of a match feeling my opponent out — testing resistance, grip strength, and speed. If I sense a gap, I strike. If they counter, I change direction. Think of it like a chess match: each move you make should create an opportunity for the next.

The moment you stop learning, you stop improving. Every opponent you face is a lesson in disguise.

Switching Mid-Match

Switching techniques during a match is one of the hardest but most rewarding skills to master. Imagine setting up for a top-roll — your opponent expects it, braces for it — and then you instantly transition into a deep hook. That unpredictability is devastating because your opponent's defense collapses.

But to execute that switch effectively, your muscles, timing, and instincts must be in harmony. It's not something you can fake. You must drill both moves until they feel natural. The goal is not to think, but to react.

The Role of Visualization and Practice

Every time I train, I visualize different scenarios. I ask myself:

“What if my opponent slips?”

“What if they hit faster than I expect?”

“What if my hand opens up?”

Then I train for each one. I put myself in uncomfortable positions because comfort never builds champions. By practicing for failure, you prepare for success.

This is where the mental game and the physical game connect. The more scenarios you visualize and practice, the calmer you'll be during unexpected moments. You'll move with purpose, not panic.

Learning from the Greats

If you want inspiration, look no further than the 1987 classic *Over the Top*. Sylvester Stallone's character, Lincoln Hawk, wasn't just fighting for titles — he was fighting for redemption. That's what this sport embodies: redemption through effort. You might lose, get injured, or face personal setbacks, but as long as you keep showing up, you're already a winner.

The point is: don't be a one-dimensional arm wrestler. Be a creative one. Be strategic, analytical, and flexible. The more techniques you master, the more tools you have to build your legacy.

Chapter 8: Arm Wrestling in North America – The Path of a Champion

When I started competing, the landscape of arm wrestling in North America was completely different from what it is today. Back then, tournaments were smaller, often hosted in community halls, gyms, or even pubs. Today, the sport has grown into a global spectacle, with professional divisions, sponsorships, and livestreamed events watched by thousands.

But even with this growth, one thing remains true: arm wrestling is a sport of the people. It's raw, authentic, and built on passion — not paychecks.

Amateur vs. Professional Divisions

In Canada, most tournaments were traditionally amateur. You could win medals, trophies, or titles, but not money. It wasn't about the prize — it was about pride. The BC Provincials, the Canadian Nationals — these were events where you proved your worth not through earnings, but through effort.

In the United States, things developed differently. There, you have both amateur and professional divisions. Once you compete for prize money, you're considered a professional and can't go back to the amateur ranks. It's a clear line — one that shapes how you plan your career.

I've always enjoyed the flexibility of being Canadian because it allows me to compete in both systems. I can pull in amateur events at home and professional tournaments across the border. That combination has helped me grow as both an athlete and a mentor.

The Community Spirit

One of my favorite things about arm wrestling is the sense of community. No matter where you go — Alberta, Ontario, Washington State, California — the atmosphere is the same. You walk into a venue and immediately feel the energy. Everyone is there for the same reason: to test themselves and share their love for the sport.

I've met some of the best people I know through arm wrestling. People who would lend you their equipment, give you training tips, or share a meal after a long tournament day. That's what sets this sport apart from others. We might face each other as opponents for a few seconds on the table, but outside of that, we're family.

Canadian Heroes

Canada has produced some of the world's greatest arm wrestlers. Devon Larratt, Dave Hicks, Anthony Dall'Antonia — these names are synonymous with excellence. I've had the honor of competing alongside and learning from them. Watching their dedication, humility, and skill reminds me that greatness is not a destination — it's a lifestyle.

I believe that being a Canadian arm wrestler is something special. We may not always have the biggest stages or the largest audiences, but we have heart. And in this sport, the heart can outlast almost anything.

What It Takes to Compete

Whether you're pulling in Canada or the USA, the fundamentals remain the same: train hard, study harder, and respect the sport. Every tournament, no matter how small, is a chance to refine your craft.

I encourage every aspiring arm wrestler to compete as soon as possible. Don't wait until you feel "ready." You'll never feel completely ready. The experience of standing across from another competitor, hearing the crowd, and feeling that surge of adrenaline — that's where real growth happens.

Competing teaches you things practice never can: how to manage nerves, how to recover from mistakes, and how to fight through fatigue when every muscle burns. The North American arm wrestling scene is thriving, and there's room for everyone — from new pullers finding their footing to veterans chasing world titles. Step up to the table. Your journey begins there.

Chapter 9: From Near Death to Champion

In August of 2018, my life changed forever. One moment, I was crossing the street in Vancouver; the next, I was lying on the ground, struggling to breathe. A car had struck me — and as it slowed down, it rolled over me.

I don't remember the pain — I remember the silence. The world seemed to pause. When I opened my eyes again, I was in the hospital, surrounded by machines, wires, and people who didn't know if I'd survive.

The doctors told me I was lucky to be alive. Over the course of my life, I've been in four serious car accidents, but this one was different. This one forced me to confront my own mortality. For over a month, I lay in a hospital bed at Vancouver General Hospital, trying to understand why I was still here.

Every day, the nurse brought me a tray of pills — morning and night. Nine medications in total. It felt overwhelming. One day, I asked the nurse, "Why am I on so many pills?" She told me to speak to the doctor. When he came in, I asked him to explain each one. He went through the list, describing what every pill did and what it was meant to prevent.

When he finished, I asked, "Which ones do I truly need?" Together, we crossed off five medications that weren't essential. That day, I realized something powerful: you are always responsible for your own health. If I hadn't spoken up, I might still be taking unnecessary drugs, suffering unnecessary side effects.

That experience changed everything for me. I went from feeling like a patient to taking control of my recovery. Within weeks, I went from nine pills to three. Within months, I started walking again. Within a year, I was back at the arm wrestling table.

The Power of Purpose

People ask me how I came back after something like that. The truth is, I had a reason — a why. Arm wrestling gave me that purpose. It reminded me that strength isn't about how much you can lift, but how much you can endure.

There were moments when I wanted to give up. When I felt pain so deep it seemed endless. But I kept thinking about the people I'd inspired, the students who looked to me for guidance, the competitors who respected me not for winning, but for never quitting. That became my fuel.

I learned that resilience isn't built in the gym — it's built in recovery. Every small victory counts. Standing up, taking a step, gripping a cup — those moments mattered more than any trophy I'd ever won.

Turning Pain into Purpose

My recovery became my mission. I started sharing my story — not to seek sympathy, but to remind others that no matter what life throws at you, you can rise again.

Strength comes from persistence, not perfection.

When I returned to training, I moved more slowly, but with more intention. I listened to my body. I appreciated every moment of motion. Arm wrestling once again became my teacher — showing me patience, discipline, and gratitude.

I learned to see every match as a celebration of life. Every handshake, every pull, every sore muscle — proof that I was still here, still capable, still fighting.

The Mindset of a Survivor

Coming back from near death doesn't just make you physically stronger — it reshapes your perspective. Suddenly, the little things don't matter as much. You realize that every obstacle, every setback, is just another opportunity to prove your strength.

Arm wrestling saved my life because it gave me something to look forward to — something that demanded focus, grit, and growth. It taught me to turn tragedy into triumph.

So, when people ask how I keep going, even after injuries or losses, I tell them: because I can. Because I get to. Because I'm still here — and as long as I am, I'll keep pulling, teaching, and inspiring others to do the same.

Chapter 10: Grip Strength — The Hidden Key to Power and Health

Grip strength is the heartbeat of arm wrestling. It's the first point of contact, the bridge between your willpower and your opponent's resistance. Before the referee even says "Ready... Go!", the match has already begun in your hands.

What many people don't realize is that grip strength goes far beyond arm wrestling. It's a direct reflection of your overall health, endurance, and even longevity. Studies show that people with stronger grips tend to live longer, have better cardiovascular health, and recover faster from injuries. I've seen it in my own life and in the athletes I train — a strong grip equals a strong body.

Understanding the Anatomy of Strength

The human hand is a masterpiece of engineering — 27 bones, countless muscles, ligaments, and nerves all working in harmony. Every pull, twist, and hold activates a chain reaction through the wrist, forearm, elbow, shoulder, and even the back. That's why I never isolate grip work — I treat it as part of a full system.

Over the years, I've collected tools and exercises that have become my daily routine. These tools aren't fancy — they're simple, portable, and incredibly effective. Here are my 9 go-to grip training tools:

1. Green hand grip tool (for crushing strength)
2. Wrist rotation tool (for pronation and supination)
3. Forearm roller (for endurance and control)
4. Powerball gyroscope (for coordination)
5. Resistance bands (attachable anywhere)
6. Hand grippers (various tensions)
7. Soft squeeze balls (for endurance work)
8. Bocce ball (for static grip)
9. GripPro trainer (for adjustable resistance)

I keep some of these in my car, some at home, and some in my gym bag. You never know when you'll have five spare minutes to squeeze in a few reps. The secret is consistency — not intensity. A few minutes every day adds up to thousands of micro-repetitions that compound over time.

Grip as a Health Indicator

Beyond performance, grip strength tells you a lot about your health. When I test my students' grip, I can often tell who's eating well, who's sleeping enough, and who's under stress. Weak grip doesn't just mean weak muscles — it can indicate overtraining, dehydration, or lack of recovery.

That's why I tell everyone: train your grip, but respect it. Don't overwork it to the point of pain. The goal is sustainable strength — the kind that lasts a lifetime.

Mindset in Grip Training

Every squeeze is a reminder that you're taking control. When I pick up a hand gripper, I don't just train my fingers — I train my focus. The hand is the connection between thought and action. A strong grip means mental discipline as much as physical power.

If there's one lesson to remember, it's this: strength starts in your hands, but it grows from your heart. Grip is not just a skill — it's a symbol of perseverance.

Chapter 11: Sportsmanship and Team Spirit — The Soul of the Sport

Arm wrestling isn't just about who wins and who loses — it's about how you play. True champions understand that respect and sportsmanship are just as important as trophies.

Some of my best friends in life are people I've competed against — and sometimes lost to. During a match, they're my rivals; after the match, they're my teammates in spirit. That's what makes this sport special.

Friendship in Competition

When I walk into a tournament, I see a room full of people who understand me. They know the hours of training, the sacrifices, the pain. There's mutual respect that transcends competition.

Before a match, I always shake hands with my opponent and wish them luck. It doesn't make me weak — it makes me centered. Whether I win or lose, I always say, "Good match." That simple gesture builds trust and camaraderie that lasts beyond the event.

Turning Rivals into Mentors

Some of the greatest lessons I've learned came from people who beat me. Instead of seeing them as enemies, I saw them as teachers. Every time I lost, I'd ask, "What did they do better? How can I learn from that?" That attitude transformed my career.

One of the most powerful moments I've witnessed in my life happened at a tournament in Penticton, British Columbia. During the BC Provincial Championships on Skaha Beach, I saw a competitor break his arm mid-match — a devastating spiral fracture. Everyone froze. The sound was unforgettable. But what stood out to me most was what happened afterward. The following year, that same man returned and competed again. When I saw him, I asked, "Didn't your arm break last year?" He smiled and said, "That was my right — this is my left."

That kind of courage defines what this sport is all about — resilience, bravery, and respect for the game.

The Role of Humility

Winning humbly is just as important as losing gracefully. I've seen many athletes lose the respect of their peers because they celebrated without class or blamed others for their losses. Arm wrestling teaches humility — because the moment you think you're unbeatable, someone will prove you wrong.

At every tournament, I remind myself: "Lower the stakes, not the standards." Play fair. Support others. Respect the referees. Celebrate others' victories as much as your own.

Strategic Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship doesn't mean being naive. It's possible to be respectful and strategic. When setting up at the table, I stay relaxed, give the impression of being easygoing — what my peers call "the master of misconception." While staying calm, I'm studying my opponent, waiting for that perfect moment to strike.

The trick is to be calm, light-handed, and fast. The tenser you are, the slower you move. Staying loose and composed not only earns respect but also gives you a performance edge.

Team and Legacy

I'm proud to be part of one of the best arm wrestling teams in Canada — the Vancouver Arm Wrestling Club. Our members, including Dave Hicks, Anthony Dall'Antonia, and myself, have all won the John Miazdzuk Award — one of the greatest honors in Canadian arm wrestling. John was the heart and soul of our sport. His passion built a community that continues to grow today.

When we compete, we don't just represent ourselves — we represent a legacy. That's what I want for every athlete I train: to compete with integrity, to build others up, and to make the sport better than they found it.

Chapter 12: Staying Lean, Fit, and Focused

Arm wrestling is not just a sport of strength — it's a lifestyle of discipline. Staying in shape, maintaining weight, and keeping endurance high are essential for long-term success.

Morning Walks and Consistency

Five days a week, I wake up early, have a cup of coffee with a splash of milk, and walk or jog before breakfast. Even when it's raining or snowing — and in Vancouver, that's often — I go anyway. There's something powerful about starting your day by overcoming resistance, even in the smallest way.

One morning, I walked 3.85 km through freezing rain. My feet were soaked, my hands numb, but my mind was on fire. I knew that every step was strengthening not just my body, but my discipline. The hardest part is always starting — once you begin, the body follows the mind.

Weight Class Awareness

For arm wrestlers, weight class is a strategy. Staying lean allows you to compete against athletes of similar size but potentially less conditioning. My goal is always to compete at the top of my weight class — strong, light, and fast.

Maintaining weight doesn't mean starving yourself — it means making smart choices. I avoid processed foods, hydrate consistently, and eat balanced meals that fuel performance, not cravings. I also carry a hand-grip trainer on my walks to strengthen my hands while burning calories. Efficiency is everything.

Training Sincerity

What separates good athletes from great ones is sincerity — doing the work when no one's watching. Staying lean is not about looking good; it's about being ready. Ready for the next match, the next opportunity, the next challenge.

Fitness is not a phase — it's a way of life. I train because I love the sport, but I also train because it makes me feel alive, focused, and grounded. If you can stay consistent with small daily habits, you'll find yourself improving in every area — both on and off the table.

Chapter 13: The Importance of Sleep and Recovery

Sleep is the silent pillar of performance. You can train, eat, and supplement perfectly, but without quality rest, your progress stalls. I learned this lesson the hard way during my years working night shifts. The constant fatigue, irritability, and low recovery made me realize that sleep isn't optional — it's foundational.

Building a Healthy Sleep Routine

I aim for 7–8 hours every night. I keep my room cool, dark, and quiet. My phone stays off, my mind stays calm, and I focus on relaxation. A comfortable mattress, a supportive pillow, and a consistent bedtime make all the difference.

I avoid eating heavy meals right before bed, and I stay away from alcohol, which can disrupt deep sleep. If I can't sleep, I use light meditation or melatonin to reset my rhythm.

Arm wrestling is a sport that punishes fatigue. Without proper recovery, your tendons, ligaments, and nervous system can't heal. That's why I treat sleep as seriously as training. Every hour of rest is an investment in tomorrow's performance.

Chapter 14: Knowing When to Rest — and When to Push Forward

Injuries are part of every athlete's story. Over the years, I've torn my bicep, strained my shoulder, and pushed through more pain than I can count. But each setback taught me something crucial: pain is not the enemy — ignorance is.

When I tore my right bicep after a shoulder injury, most people told me to quit. But I refused. I saw the pain as motivation. I studied what caused it, improved my form, and rebuilt stronger. The key is knowing when to stop and when to keep going. Pushing through pain can build toughness, but ignoring recovery can end careers. The art of longevity lies in listening to your body. I've spent over \$80,000 on travel, training, and competition over three decades and earned far less in return. But the true reward has never been money — it's been meaning. The satisfaction of victory, the lessons in loss, the connections made through struggle — those are priceless.

If you ever feel like quitting, remind yourself why you started. Your purpose will carry you further than any muscle ever could.

Chapter 15: The Top 5 Secrets to Winning Every Match

Every champion has their principles. These are mine—the five rules I live by, on and off the table:

1. Practice Relentlessly

There's no substitute for repetition. The more you practice, the more instinctive your movements become. Every hour at the table refines your timing, balance, and reflexes.

2. Study Your Opponents

Observation is power. Watch their technique, posture, and preferred moves. Know how they win — and prepare to counter it.

3. Master the Four Winning Moves

The foundation of every great arm wrestler lies in these techniques:

- Top-roll (for leverage)
- Hook (for control)
- Cupping with side pressure (for domination)
- Dragging straight down (for surprise finishes)

4. Be Strategic with Fouls

Sometimes taking a foul can save you. Starting early or moving your elbow off the pad may reset the match and give you a chance to regain control. It's risky — but in the right moment, it can change everything.

5. Perfect Your Positioning

Body mechanics are everything. Keep your shoulder behind your hand, your hips close to the table, and your power line intact. Use your whole body — from the ground up — to generate force.

Above all, believe in your preparation. Doubt drains strength faster than fatigue.

Conclusion — The Champion's Mindset

Arm wrestling has been my greatest teacher. It's shown me the meaning of discipline, the value of patience, and the beauty of resilience.

From my first loss to my greatest wins, from injuries to near-death experiences, this sport has shaped who I am. It's given me friendships, stories, lessons, and a reason to wake up every day with purpose.

If you've made it this far, you already share that spark — the desire to grow, to improve, to challenge yourself. My message to you is simple: never stop pulling.

Keep training. Keep learning. Keep believing. Because strength isn't built in the gym — it's built in the moments you refuse to give up.

Champions aren't born — they're built.

—Clayton Faulconer

ArmWrestlingCoach & Champion | PersonalTrainer

About the Author

Clayton Faulconer is a Canadian arm wrestling champion with over 30 years of competitive experience. He has competed nationally and internationally, coached hundreds of athletes, and continues to dedicate his life to strengthening the arm wrestling community.

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